August 30, 2004

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger   via fax
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2901 - CELL PHONE RECYCLING – SUPPORT

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

On behalf of the City of Santa Barbara, I am writing to respectfully ask you to sign AB 2901 (Pavley), which will establish a low-cost and convenient cell phone recycling system for California.

Cell phone users have increased to 19 million statewide. However, this advanced technology and communication has a down side: The average life span of a cell phone is only 18 months. It is estimated that 16.3 million cell phones become obsolete and are discarded in California landfills every year -- 44,650 every day. When you add that to the obsolete cell phones of the past, it is estimated that 62.5 million cell phones will be stockpiled in California homes by 2005.

Not only is this a burden on landfill space, but cell phones contain myriad toxic materials and Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxins (PBTs) that are released into the air and groundwater when burned in waste incinerators or disposed of in landfills. Testing performed by the University of Florida for the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control shows that cell phones are likely to be determined hazardous when disposed and will need to be managed as universal waste, meaning disposal in landfills will be illegal.

AB 2901 builds upon the voluntary market-based recycling programs already established by cell phone service providers and manufacturers, and levels the playing field by simply requiring any person who sells cell phones in California to take back unwanted cell phones at no cost to the consumer.

Please sign AB 2901 into law and continue your positive approach to environmental issues.

Sincerely,

Marty Blum
Mayor

cc: Assembly Member Fran Pavley
   Assembly Member Hannah-Beth Jackson
   State Senator Tom McClintock
   City Council Members
   Jim Armstrong, City Administrator
   Tony Nisich, Public Works Director
   Stephen MacIntosh, Environmental Programs Supervisor

STM